

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EA-10 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00

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PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-12 SSM-03 /111 W

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P R 281712Z NOV 77

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5019

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT POUCH

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USMISSION SINAI

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 17231

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, SOPN, UR, XF, SO

SUBJECT: SOVIET MEDIA CRITICIZE SADAT VISIT AND SOMALI ABROGATION
OF FRIENDSHIP TREATY

REF: MOSCOW 17161 NOTAL

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SUMMARY: SOVIET PANELISTS ON NOV 26 TV

PROGRAM CRITICIZE SADAT VISIT TO ISRAEL AND SOMALI ABROGATION

OF FRIENDSHIP TREATY. SPEAKER ON SADAT VISIT

DOES NOT DISCUSS SADAT'S SPEECH TOO EGYPTIAN PARLIAMENT.

HE GOES EASY ON US AND EMPHASIZES SIGNIFICANCE

OF JOINT SOVIET-US STATEMENT ON ME. PRAVDA SUNDAY

INTERNATIONAL ROUNDUP, HOWEVER, DOES CRITICIZE ALLEGED

US INVOLVEMENT IN BRINGING ABOUT SADAT VISIT. TV PANELIST (TASS DIRECTOR GENERAL ZAMYATIN) ASSERTS THAT STATE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED THAT USG WOULD ALLOW THIRD COUNTRY TRANSFER OF US WEAPONS TO SOMALIA. END SUMMARY.

1. AS REFTEL PREDICTED, "STUDIO NINE" TV PANEL DISCUSSION NOVEMBER 26 DID TOUCH ON SADAT VISIT TO ISRAEL (ALTHOUGH NOT ON HIS SPEECH TO EGYPTIAN PARLIAMENT) AND ON DEVELOPMENTS IN HORN OF AFRICA. CONTRARY TO REFTEL, PANEL DID NOT INCLUDE ARBATOV (USA INSTITUTE) AND INOZEMTSEV (IMEMO). ACTUAL SPEAKERS, HOWEVER, WERE SUFFICIENTLY KNOWLEDGEABLE TO MAKE THEIR VIEWS OF INTEREST. Y.M. PRIMAKOV, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF IMEMO AND SOVIET M.E. EXPERT, SPOKE AT LENGTH ON SADAT VISIT AND L.M. ZAMYATIN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF TASS, CONCLUDED WITH BRIEF REMARKS ON SITUATION IN HORN.

2. SADAT VISIT: PRIMAKOV WAS QUITE CRITICAL OF THE SADAT VISIT, BUT HE DELIVERED THIS CRITICISM IN A RATHER RESTRAINED FASHION. PUTTING THE VISIT IN THE CONTEXT OF EFFORTS BY "REACTIONARY" ARAB STATES TO ISOLATE "PROGRESSIVE" ARAB STATES AND SEPARATE THEM FROM THE SOVIET UNION, HE EMPHASIZED THREE RHETORICAL QUESTIONS:
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--WHAT PRACTICAL MEASURES WOULD RESULT FROM SADAT'S VISIT?

--DID THE VISIT DIVIDE OR UNITE THE ARAB WORLD IN ITS STRUGGLE?

--DID THE VISIT BRING GENEVA CLOSER OR PUSH IT FURTHER AWAY?

ANSWERING ALL THESE QUESTIONS IN A NEGATIVE MANNER, HE THEN NOTED SADAT'S LACK OF REFERENCE TO THE PLO IN HIS KNESSET SPEECH AND DESCRIBED BEGIN'S GOALS WITH REGARD TO THE VISIT. THESE GOALS INCLUDED:

--SHATTERING ARAB UNITY;

--PUSHING THE IDEA OF WORKING GROUPS (WHICH WOULD SERVE TO EXCLUDE THE SOVIET UNION);

--AVOIDING GENEVA BY ENGAGING IN DIRECT BILATERAL TALKS WITH THE VARIOUS ARAB COUNTRIES INVOLVED.

3. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A REFERENCE TO US INSPIRATION FOR THE ORIGINAL IDEA OF ME "WORKING GROUPS" AND TO SADAT'S PURSUIT OF AN "OPENLY ANTI-SOVIET COURSE" TO OBTAIN US ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, PRIMAKOV AVOIDED A MINOR THEME WHICH HAS

APPEARED IN SOVIET MEDIA OF CRITICISM OF ALLEGED US
MOTIVATION FOR SADAT'S VISIT. RATHER HE STRONGLY
EMPHASIZED THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE JOINT SOVIET-US
STATEMENT ON THE ME ("AN ENORMOUSLY IMPORTANT DOCU-
MENT") WHICH HE SAID SIGNIFIED "A CERTAIN CORRECTIVE"
TO WASHINGTON'S ME POLICY - PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD
TO US RECOGNITION OF THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM AND TO
THE ACCEPTANCE OF GENEVA AS THE "ONLY" FORUM FOR AN
ALL AROUND SETTLEMENT OF THE ME PROBLEM.

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4. HORN OF AFRICA: CONCLUDING THE PROGRAM, ZAMYATIN:
--CHARACTERIZED ANTI-SOVIET PROPAGANDA IN SOMALIA
AS REFLECTING AND RESULTING FROM "CHINESE SUBVERSIVE
ACTIVITY" IN SOMALIA IN RECENT MONTHS;

--NOTED THAT FRIENDSHIP TREATY HAD BEEN CONCLUDED
AT SOMALI INITIATIVE;
--DESCRIBED THE NUMEROUS ATTEMPTS OF THE SOVIET
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LEADERSHIP TO DISCUSS THE OGADEN SITUATION WITH THE
SOMALI LEADERS; ATTEMPTS WHICH WERE CONSISTENTLY
MET WITH DENIALS OF THE INVOLVEMENT OF SOMALI TROOPS;
--SAID THAT IMMEDIATELY AFTER ABROGATING THE
FRIENDSHIP TREATY, SOMALIA HAD TURNED TO REACTIONARY
THIRD COUNTRIES FOR ARMS. IN THAT CONTEXT, HE MADE
THE FOLLOWING ASSERTION: "AND THE UNITED STATES MADE
A STATEMENT IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT ITSELF, THAT IT
WAS READY TO ALLOW THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH PURCHASE
ARMS IN THE UNITED STATES TO SUPPLY THOSE ARMS TO
SOMALIA."

5. COMMENT: IN PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS WITH EMBASSY
OFFICERS, PRIMAKOV HAS NOT BEEN SPARING OF COMMENTS
CRITICAL OF US POLICY IN THE ME. HE HAS WRITTEN
NUMEROUS ARTICLES ON THE SUBJECT OF US POLICY IN THE
REGION WHICH HAVE CONSISTENTLY REFLECTED SOVIET SUSPICION
OF US POLICY, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO
US INTEREST IN LESSENING SOVIET INVOLVEMENT AND
INFLUENCE IN THE REGION. IT IS INTERESTING THEREFORE
THAT HE CHOSE TO SOFT PEDAL THAT TEMPTING LINE IN HIS
"STUDIO NINE" APPEARANCE. ON OTHER HAND, OLEG
SKALKIN (DEPUTY DIRECTOR PRAVDA AFRO-ASIAN DEPT.) IN
THAT PORTION OF NOV 27 PRAVDA "INTERNATIONAL WEEK"
COLUMN DEVOTED TO ME., IMPLICITLY, BUT CLEARLY,
CRITICIZED THE ALLEGED US ROLE IN BRINGING ABOUT
THE "RECONCILIATION" IN JERUSALEM. HE DESCRIBED OPEN
SATISFACTION OVER RECENT EVENTS EXPRESSED BY "INFLUENTIAL
AMERICAN CIRCLES" AND THE "OMNIPOTENT PRO-
ISRAELI LOBBY" IN AMERICAN CONGRESS, AND HE CITED
ENERGY SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S RECENT PRO-ISRAELI
REMARKS TO A WASHINGTON SESSION OF BNAI BRITH.

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6. SOVIET CONFUSION OVER THE BACKGROUND AND THE
FUTURE RAMIFICATIONS OF SADAT VISIT REMAINS, PARTICULARLY
WITH REGARD TO US INVOLVEMENT IN RECENT
DEVELOPMENTS. WE DO NOT DOUBT THAT SOVIET SUSPICION
OF US POLICY GOALS ALSO REMAINS, BUT SO FAR
EXISTENCE OF JOINT SOVIET-US STATEMENT HAS SERVED

TO WARD OFF EXTREME EXPRESSIONS OF THAT SUSPICION.
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